

**STATEWIDE COUNCIL FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION  
MEETING  
MARRIOTT, LEXINGTON, KY  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2005**

**Members Present:** David Allgood, John Basham, Lisa Durham; Kim Egan, Pam Hancock, Marlene Huff, Kat MaGee, Darrell Mattingly, Derrick Meadows, Carl Metz, Angela Slaton, Mike Sanders, Beth Smith, George Warren

**Staff Present:** Wade Bailey, Veeta Erwin, Allison Jessee, Dave Matheis, Holly Matney, Greg Willett, Mindy Yates

**Guests Present:** Jerome Mahim, Workers Compensation; Carmen Watts, CAP Intern; Norb Ryan, State ADA Coordinator; Shannon Caldwell, SILC; Pat Seybold, KDDC; Chase Forrester and Maureen Forrester, KATS Network; Madison Warren; Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs; and Paula Caldwell

**Interpreter:** Tara Eversole

**Notetaker:** Laura Kogut

George Warren, co chair, welcomed everyone for Marlene Huff, chair and reported that Marlene will be joining the council later. Everyone introduced themselves.

**Executive Director's Report:** Beth gave an overview of the activities of central office. Due to hurricane Katrina and the fuel shortage, all of state government has been asked to restrict travel to essential travel only. This will not affect counselors and job placement specialists. It is hoped that this will be a short-lived restriction. The strategic plan has been completed and Allison will be reviewing the plan with the Policy and Planning Committee. We have been working on the plan for six months and have received a lot of feedback from staff. The plan will be reviewed about every three months and changes will be made as necessary. The strategic plan is a good roadmap and will be useful to the agency. No new appointments for the council have been made. Beth spoke with Hollis Rosenstein from the Governor's Office and we hope to have the new appointments within the next two weeks. Beth thanked everyone for their willingness to continue to serve on the council. Ralph has started working on the two-year budget and will be making a presentation to the council in March. The agency is requesting additional funds for supported employment and long-term support. We are in the process of hiring two new branch managers for Elizabethtown and Lexington. Mindy will be representing the agency on the Medicaid Buy-In Task Force and will be reporting later. Beth was pleased to report that the new salary compensation proposal has been approved and implemented. Commissioner Owens and Secretary Fox have been very supportive in this initiative and Beth expressed her appreciation. There is now a specialist series and a counselor series. The upgrade and salary increase will make the agency more competitive with other states and other state agencies; assure that Kentuckians with disabilities are served by the most qualified/trained counselors; and should assist in recruitment and retention staff. Some counselors received \$6,000 raises if they had the MRC and CRC. One hundred forty to 150 staff received an

## Minutes Approved on December 12, 2005

increase (varying in the amount) in salary. The cost to the agency is approximately \$500,000 per year.

**Program Services Report:** Wade Bailey reported for Sherri. Wade introduced Greg Willett, the new assistant director for Program Services. Greg has been in the position since June 16<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to Beth's efforts, the agency has been very fortunate to be able to fill counselor vacancies. Wade reported that Kentucky was one of only 11 VR general state agencies (out of over 50) that achieved all of the standards and indicators. Wade also emphasized how important the new classifications are to the agency in making sure that the highest qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors serve Kentuckians with disabilities. Beth and Ralph are to be commended for all of their hard work.

**OVR Issues:** Mindy reported that we hoped to have the new order of selection and eligibility work sheet for the Policy and Planning Committee to review. The Branch Managers had an opportunity to review and apply the new order of selection and eligibility process and recommended that some changes be made. With the restrictions on travel, we will delay requesting nominations for employer recognition from the districts. We hope to know early in October when Beth will be able to travel to the local offices. We have received one nomination for the Partner Award from the council. Mindy encouraged council members to submit their nominations for this award. Mindy requested that the Public Awareness/Legislative Committee make a recommendation on how OVR can assist in getting the word out to consumers regarding Medicare Part D and encourage them to enroll in a plan. Medicare Part D takes effect January 2006. Sign-up begins September 15<sup>th</sup>. OVR has representation on both the Medicaid Buy-in Task Force and the Steering committee. If the council has any input regarding the Medicaid Buy-In, please let Mindy know.

Sue Simon gave a presentation and answered questions on Ethics and Conflict of Interest. Wade gave an update on the RSA Monitoring Conference. Marlene reported on the Leadership Conference she recently attended.

### **Business Meeting**

Marlene called the meeting to order.

**Minutes Approval:** Motion to approve the minutes as distributed. (Mattingly/Allgood)  
Motion passed.

**Chair Report:** Marlene stated that she appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Leadership Conference in Washington and see the future of VR and the challenges that are ahead.

**Staff Report:** Mindy reported that she has been conducting CMS training in the field. In regard to the council's request to have a meeting in conjunction with the KYBLN conference, they did not have a conference this year. However, they are having their annual meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to attend, you need to contact Katie Wolf-Smith or register on the KYBLN web site. They are interested in conducting a joint meeting. The annual report is in the beginning stages. A letter was written for Marlene requesting that every effort be made to keep Dr. Crystal as head of the MRC program at the University of Kentucky. We are happy to say that Dr. Crystal has decided to rescind his resignation and remain as chair. A letter of resignation was

## Minutes Approved on December 12, 2005

received from Howell Brady and Marlene wrote a letter of appreciation to Mr. Brady for his service on the council. Brad Mills has agreed to attend the next council meeting and present on the Transition Program. Claudia Ernhart from the KYBLN will also present at the next meeting.

**CAP Report:** Angela Slaton stated that the CAP report is in the packet and asked if any one had any questions. No questions were asked.

**SILC Report:** Darrell reported for Jan Day that the SILC does not have their appointments from the Governor's office. The SILC's biannual conference held last month was a huge success. The next meeting is scheduled for next Thursday and will be held in Murray.

**Executive Committee:** Marlene reported that the committee met and discussed the devastation and the impact of Hurricane Katrina and made the following motion. **Motion to write a letter of support to the Statewide Rehabilitation chairs in the three states most impacted by Hurricane Katrina: Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.** Beth stated that she has been in contact with her counterparts and has offered assistances from Kentucky OVR. They said that they have received a lot of assistance and that currently they were in good shape as far as meeting the needs of their consumers. Beth told them she would be checking to see if there was anything Kentucky OVR could do. It was suggested that a method of communication between council chairs be developed. Marlene and Mindy will work on developing a list serve or method of communication between councils. **Motion passed.** The committee discussed the issues of people with disabilities in emergency evacuations efforts at all levels and concerns that people with disabilities are affected in more drastic ways than their able-bodied countered parts. Great plans can be developed, however, implementing in a proper and timely manner is the key to saving lives. The committee **recommends that the Council write letters to the Rehabilitation Services Administration/national level and to the Governor urging them to play a significant role in assuring that all vulnerable populations are considered when developing and implementing emergency evacuation plans.** **Motion passed.** The committee discussed the lack of new appointments and decided that the council should continue their job of assisting the agency in serving individuals with disabilities. The bylaws need to be changed to deal with the delays in appointments. The committee decided to table discussing nominations for officers until December. The committee also had a discussion regarding the SCVR budget and the authority of the council to make decision regarding expenditures and activities. Several recommendations have been approved and then canceled or delayed due to spending restrictions. The committee **recommends that the agency investigate this issue and report back to the committee at the next meeting.** **Motion passed.** The committee made a **motion for the agency to take a more active role in CSAVR (Council of State Administrators for Vocational Rehabilitation) on the national level.** Kentucky has a wealth of experience and knowledge that could provide good leadership at that level. This is a compliment to agency staff. Beth stated that Patty Conway serves on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services committee and that she (Beth) is trying to get more involved. **Motion passed.** To address the Ethics Statement, Marlene asked for volunteers to serve on an Ad Hoc committee to revise the bylaws to include a disclosure section. George Warren, Darrell Mattingly, Pam Hancock and Marlene agreed to work on this. Staff will set up a conference call. The committee reviewed the Interagency Coordinating Committee's work plan. **The committee recommends approval of the**

**IAC's work plan and priorities of supported employment and transition. Motion passed.** Marlene presented Kim Egan with the 2005 Advocacy Award.

**Nominating Committee:** Pam is hopeful that appointments will be made soon and thanked everyone for their willingness to continue to serve. Several packets have been sent to perspective nominations. If anyone has someone they think would be interested in serving, please let Mindy or Veeta know.

**Public Awareness/Legislative Committee:** David reported that the annual report is due by the end of the year. Jason asked that any input/suggestions be e-mailed to him. The annual report will look a lot like the previous year. The employer recognitions have been put on hold due to travel restrictions. If you have any suggestions about how to handle the employer recognition, please let Jason know. The new Consumer information brochures will be out soon. Jason has a great consumer to feature in the brochures. The CDPCRC video has been completed and will be distributed in various formats (DVD, CD-rom, VHS tape). The tape is about eight minutes long and gives an overview of the services that are available at the center. David reported that he is serving on the Medicaid Infrastructure Task Force and that they have had their first meeting. He is also serving on the Steering Committee. This committee will be recommending procedures and steps that should be implemented by the legislature and Medicaid in order to get it rolling. David will report to the council the progress of these two work groups. There has been no movement on WIA. VR may still be in danger of potential cuts in funding. This might be a good time for everyone to contact their representatives and let them know that there may be a greater demand for vocational rehabilitation services with so many people having to relocate to other states and who are getting connected to government services. Vocational rehabilitation could play an important part in assisting individuals who may have disabilities into employment. David attended a meeting with Mark McCellan regarding Medicare Part D. McCellan said that Kentucky is actually ahead of the game and that we have enrolled more people than any other state. Some consumers are confused about whether or not they have to enroll in a plan. There are questions regarding individuals who are in a pension plan, whether they will be covered by that. Information is supposed to be mailed that will hopefully answer a lot of questions. Mindy will send out more information regarding Medicare.

**Policy and Planning Committee:** George reported that the committee would like for the consumer satisfaction survey to include those individuals who were closed too significantly disabled, specifically, those individuals with mental illness who are not satisfied with VR. The committee reviewed and approved the strategic plan. The 2006 State Plan has been approved by RSA and will be available on the Internet and Intranet. The 2007 state plan visioning form locations were discussed. There are two options: A. Technology Enhanced Forums i.e. KET, Web blogging, web casting, Louisville Local Access—Insight, compressed video and face to face forums in Lexington and Louisville, . B. Face-to-Face forums in Lexington, Louisville, Bowling Green, Florence, Hazard, Madisonville and CDPCRC. After some discussion the council **voted unanimously to use Option A for the state plan visioning forums.** The committee also discussed WIA and Mr. Warren encouraged council members to contact their elected officials. The committee had asked the agency to look at the inconsistencies in spending by counselors across the state. Allison, Greg and Mike shared the importance of individualized services and that is the result in different spending on consumers. Counselors make the determination based on the individual's need, resources and goal.

## Minutes Approved on December 12, 2005

Brad Mills, administrator of the Transition Program, will be present at the December meeting to discuss VR role in ARC Meetings/Transition.

**Consumer Services and Program Evaluation:** Darrell reported that he is currently a committee of one and that the committee needs more members. A recommendation was made that the council approve the 2004 Consumer Satisfaction Survey Report.

**Motion to approve the 2004 Consumer Satisfaction Survey (Mattingly/Allgood).**

**Motion passed.** The consumer satisfaction survey needs to be abbreviated. We are asking for data from consumers that we are not using. Darrell, Dave and Marlene will work on the survey and have a prototype for the council at the next meeting. It would still be a good idea to have the focus groups, finances permitting.

**Interagency Coordinating Committee:** Carl reported that Mindy will be developing a template for committee members to use to report and share information quarterly. The committee also suggested that VR include links to each member agency on VR's website. The committee discussed how to coordinate activities related to supported employment and transition. These are the two major agenda items that the committee would like to address. The committee decided to start with supported employment and requested that Mindy contact Carol Estes and IHDl for training. The committee discussed whether to continue to meet in conjunction with the other SCVR committee meetings and decided to meet annually with the SCVR, but to continue to meet separately the other three meetings per year. The next meeting will be December 1 and is tentatively scheduled for the Department of Worker's Claims office.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** The next meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2005 at the Marriott Griffin Gate, Lexington, KY. The agenda will be slightly different. The committee meetings will be held from 9:30 am – 11:00 am and training will be from 11:00 – 12:00. Marlene asked council members to let her know of any agenda items. Marlene thanked Madison Warren for his assistance/direction during the meeting.

Carl Metz reported that a bill regarding the State Use law has been prefiled for the 2006 legislative session. The bill number is BR 71. Carl would like for individual council members to support this bill and in December he is going to ask that the full council endorse the bill also. In a full disclosure statement Carl reported that Goodwill Industries of Kentucky (his employer), Kentucky Association of Goodwill Industries (KAGI), Kentucky Association of Community Employment Services (KACES) are supporting this bill. There is a hearing before the Interim State Government Committee scheduled for October 11, 2005.

Motion to adjourn. M.Warren/Metz. Meeting adjourned.